

## Perspectives on the 2013 Budget Request and President Obama's Guidance on the Future of the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Program

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## Intensions to Change

“To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and urge others to do the same.”

*President Barack Obama, Prague, 2009 (emphasis added)*



In “making preparations for the next round of nuclear reductions” the president has asked DOD “to review strategic requirements and develop options for further reductions in our current nuclear stockpile” and “potential changes in targeting requirements and alert postures....”

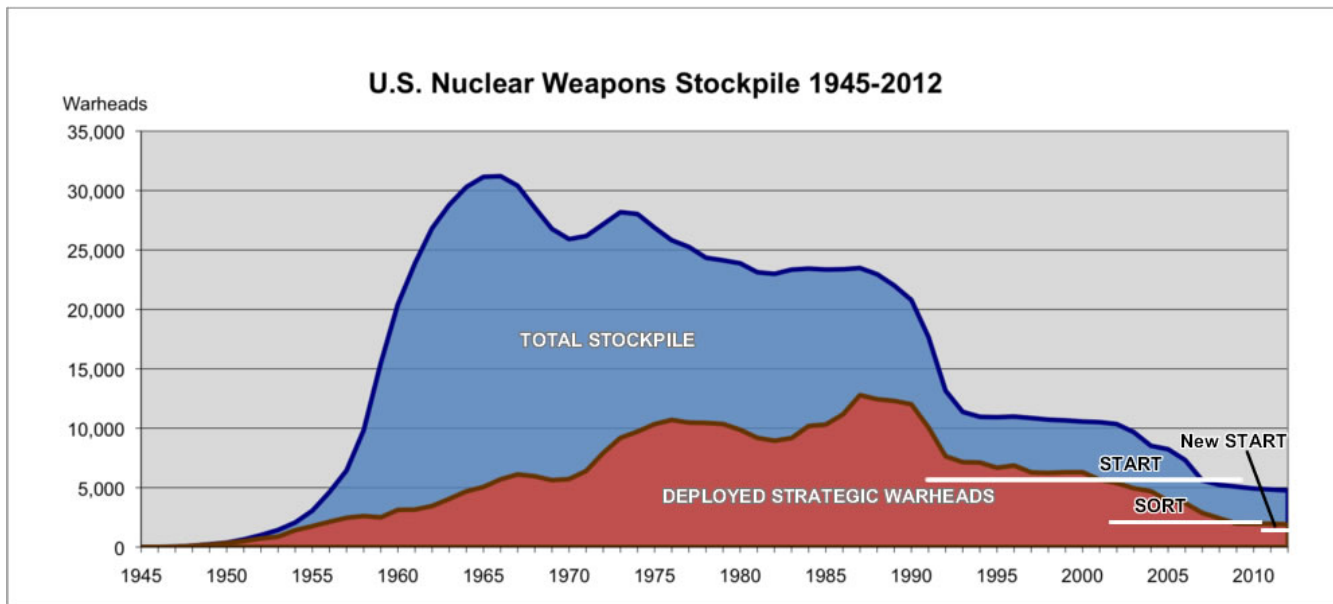
*Thomas Donilon, National Security Advisor, March 2011 (emphasis added)*

“*It is possible that our deterrence goals can be achieved with a smaller nuclear force*, which would reduce the number of nuclear weapons in our inventory as well as their role in U.S. national security strategy.”

*Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense, DOD, 2012 (emphasis in original)*

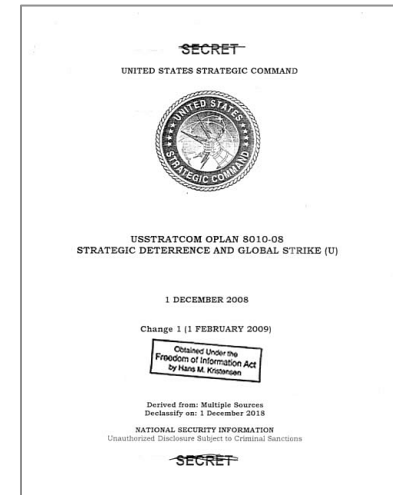
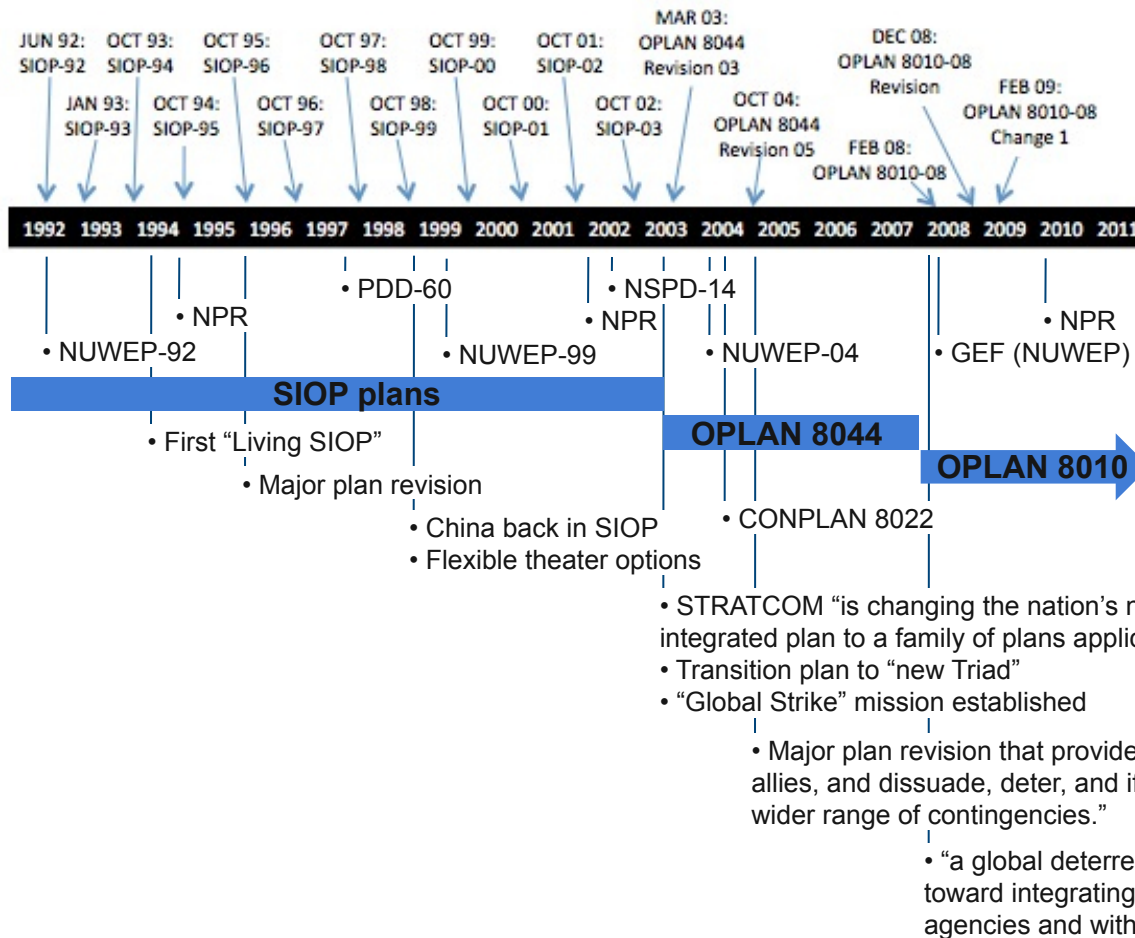


## Where Are We?




- Significant reductions in stockpile and deployed warheads compared with Cold War
- Stockpile reduction since peak in 1965 and 1974
- Deployed strategic warheads peaked in 1987
- Stockpile just below 5,000 with about 1,900 strategic and 200 tactical deployed

## Recent Nuclear War Plan History




## Wider Strategic Threat Horizon

**PLANNING FOR REGIONAL STATES** TOP SECRET




- Series of options
  - "b1" USSC
- Scenario driven approach
  - "b1" USSC
- Planning Assumption:
  - "b1" USSC


North Korean  
Taepo Dong 1



Libyan  
Tarhuna  
Facility



Scud Missile  
(Iran, Iraq, Libya)



TOP SECRET

- Proliferation concern and 9/11 attacks triggered broadening of not only conventional but also nuclear planning to “regional states” armed with WMD
- Terminology changed from deterring “nuclear” adversaries to deterring “WMD” adversaries
- Expansion from Soviet/China to anyone, anywhere
- WMD targeting is considerably broader than nuclear targeting
- Effect: strike option proliferation; do more with less

Source: STRATCOM OPLAN 8044 Revision 03 briefing slide obtained by FAS under FOIA

## Smaller But Wider War Plan

SECRET

**OPLAN 8010 Background**

- OPLAN 8010 base plan approved Dec 07, including:
  - [REDACTED] (b)(1)
  - Nuclear force employment plans

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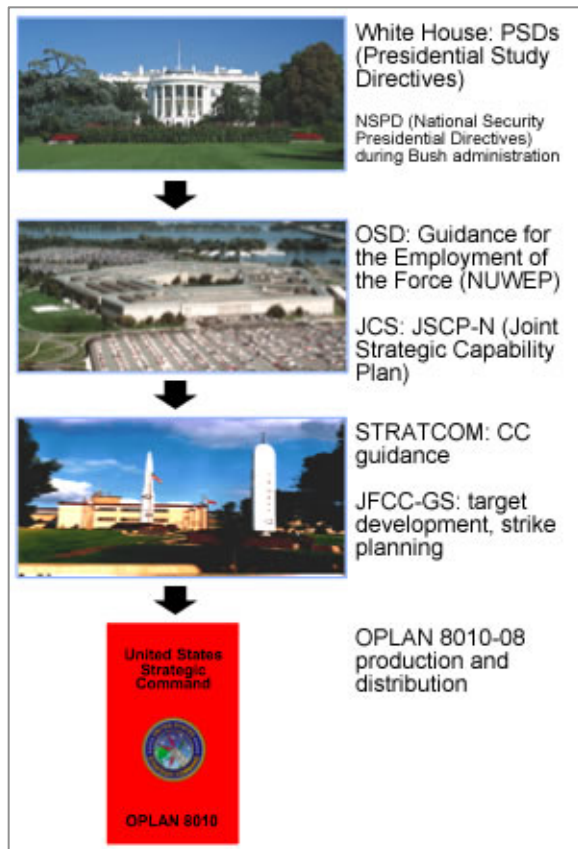
- Status of Adversary Appendices:
  - [REDACTED] Next review forecasted [REDACTED] (b)(5)
  - [REDACTED] Assumptions and concept approved [REDACTED] (b)(5)
  - [REDACTED] Final review/approval scheduled [REDACTED] (b)(5)
  - [REDACTED] Approval of assumptions and concept scheduled [REDACTED] (b)(5)
  - [REDACTED] Approval of assumptions and concept forecasted [REDACTED] (b)(5)
  - [REDACTED] Mission analysis in progress
  - [REDACTED] Mission analysis in progress

Source: STRATCOM OPLAN 8010 briefing slide obtained by FAS under FOIA

- Current strategic warplan directed against six adversaries. Probably Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Syria and 9/11-type WMD scenario
- Half do not have nuclear weapons and four of them are NPT members
- Includes four types of nuclear attack options:
  - Selective Attack Options (SAOs)
  - Basic Attack Options (BAOs)
  - Emergency Response Options (EROs)
  - Directed/Adaptive Planning Capability Options
- There are no longer Major Attack Options (MAOs) in the strategic war plan



## Nuclear War Plan Guidance

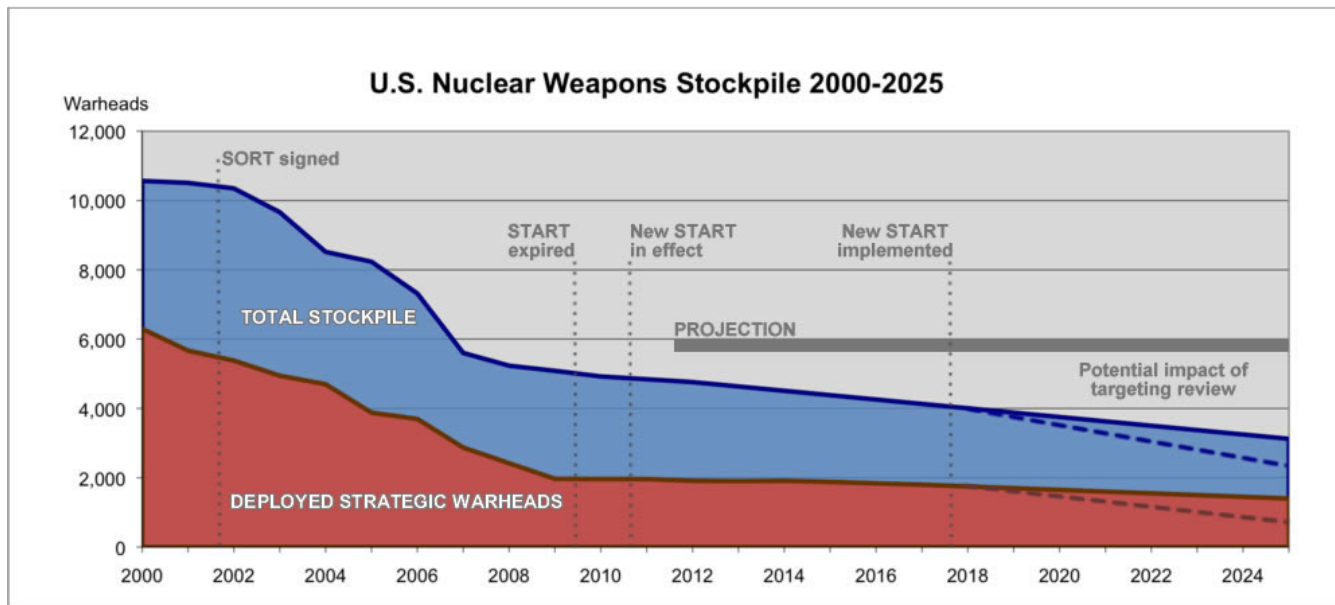


- Presidential guidance is but first step in long process
- April 2004: NUWEP 04 stated in part: “U.S. nuclear forces must be capable of, and be seen to be capable of, destroying those critical war-making and war-supporting assets and capabilities that a potential enemy leadership values most and that it would rely on to achieve its own objectives in a post-war world.”
- May 2008: NUWEP replaced by Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF), combining half a dozen previously separate guidance documents into one document
- 2011-2012: Obama administration nuclear targeting review; “options” delivered to White House but President has yet to see/decide

“[The] president’s direction to me was less than two pages; the Joint Staff’s explanation of what the president really meant to say was twenty-six pages.”

*STRATCOM Commander Admiral James Ellis, June 18, 2004*

# Reducing Numbers



- Bush W administration cut stockpile nearly in half by 2007
- Modest but consistent reductions since
- New START limit already achieved for warheads; not yet for delivery vehicles
- Additional unilateral reductions to 3,000-3,500 warheads by mid-2020s expected

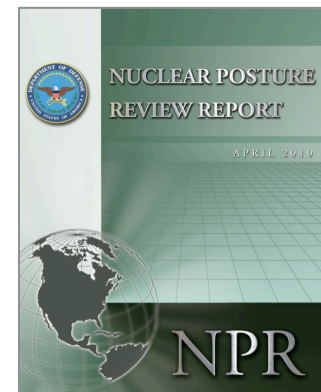


## Reducing Role

Administration says NPR reduced role of nuclear weapons:

- The review “reduces the role of nuclear weapons in our overall defense posture by declaring that the fundamental role of U.S. nuclear forces is to deter nuclear attack....Our new doctrine also extends U.S. assurances by declaring that we will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states that are members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and in compliance with their non-proliferation obligations.”

*Thomas Donilon, March 2011 (emphasis added)*



...but also says that it can't reduce role yet because:

- “there remains a narrow range of contingencies in which U.S. nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or CBW attack against the United States or its allies and partners. The United States is therefore not prepared at the present time to adopt a universal policy that the ‘sole purpose’ of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack on the United States and our allies and partners....”

*Nuclear Posture Review Report, April 2010*

## Reducing Role

“New doctrine” does not appear to reduce nuclear planning against the six adversaries in the current war plan:

Adversary	Not affected by “reduced role” because:
Russia	it has nuclear weapons
China	it has nuclear weapons
North Korea	it has nuclear weapons and is not a member of the NPT
Iran	it is not considered in compliance with the NPT and it has WMD capabilities
Syria	it is not considered in compliance with the NPT and it has WMD capabilities
9/11 scenario	involves non-state actor (not member of NPT) acting alone or in collusion with “rogue” state not in compliance with/ member of NPT



Yet the administration has “committed to take concrete steps to make deterring nuclear use the sole purpose of our nuclear forces.” *Thomas Donilon, March 2011*

## Few Hints of Policy Shift in FY2013 Budget

Delivery Platforms

**SSBNs:** maintain through 2040; \$5.5 billion for new class of 12 through FY2017 with total price tag of \$70-100 billion; first boat funded in FY2021

**ICBMs:** Maintain through 2030; \$9.4 million to study replacement, including mobile launcher

**Bombers:** Maintain current bomber fleet; \$300 million to fund next generation bomber with \$6.3 through FY2017; total force of 80-100 aircraft at \$38.5 billion - \$55 billion (FY2010 dollars)

**DCA:** Equip F-35 Block IV with nuclear capability; supply to Holland, Italy and Turkey



Warheads

**B61-12:** FPU in FY2019; \$369 million in FY2012-FY2013; \$750 million through FY2017

**W76-1:** Full-scale production through FY2018; slow pace to pay for B61-12 LEP

**W78:** LEP FPU slipped to FY2023; possibly replacement by common warhead

**W80:** Revisit LEP; ALCM replacement development of \$610 million through FY2017

**W88:** Replace AF&F; potential replacement by common warhead

Complex

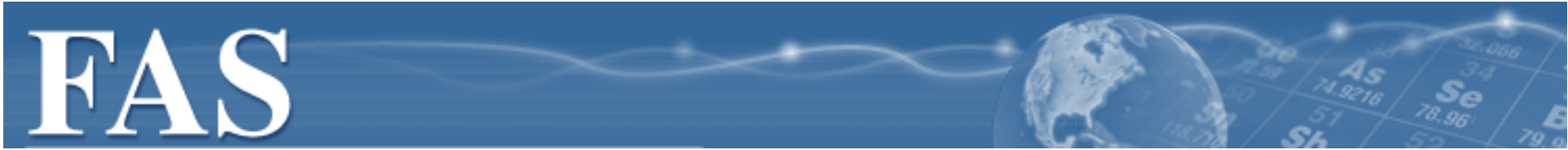
**NNSA (weapons and naval reactors):** \$8.7 billion in FY2013; \$379 million increase with \$958 million total through FY2017; \$340 for UPF construction in FY2013 for completion in mid-2020s; CMRR-NF deferred for at least five years

## Guidance Options

“Putting an end to Cold War thinking” will require more than trimming edges of posture but changing core planning assumptions and principles against Russia and China:

- Reduce the target categories
- Reduce requirement for warhead damage expectancy in strike options
- Reduce options
- Remove requirement to plan for prompt launch of nuclear weapons
- Remove requirement to plan for damage-limitation strikes
- Limit role to deter nuclear attack; “we have committed to take concrete steps to make nuclear use the sole purpose of our nuclear forces.” *(Thomas Donilon, March 2011)*
- Limit or end counterforce and force-on-force warfighting planning; “Counterforce is preemptive, or offensively reactive.” *(DOD, Counterproliferation Operational Architecture, April 2002)*
- Limit posture to secure retaliatory capability

Further reading: “Reviewing Nuclear Guidance: Putting Obama’s Words Into Action,” *Arms Control Today*, November 2011, <http://tinyurl.com/7x3oamq>



# QUESTIONS?